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## I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) supports the goals of the state to ensure the safety and welfare of Louisiana citizens during emergencies and disasters. It is the agency's role and responsibility to carry out the Emergency Support Function (ESF-6) of mass care, housing, and human services during emergencies and disasters.

This policy outlines travel operations and procedures for DCFS employees who perform duties to support the emergency preparedness goals of the agency during emergencies and disasters in accordance with [DCFS Policy 1-02, Emergency Preparedness](#) and [DCFS Policy 4-10, Human Resources Procedures for Emergency-Disaster Operations](#).

This policy shall apply to any employee who travels to work at any ESF-6 location. Emergency/disaster travel does not apply to travel for drills, meetings and routine tasks performed except travel conducted in preparation for an imminent event or during an actual event as declared by the Governor or the Commissioner of Administration.


The Emergency/Disaster Travel Policy shall be enacted when the Governor declares an official State of Emergency or the State Emergency Operations Center is activated at a Level 3 or above, whichever comes first. Compliance with the Emergency/Disaster Travel Policy shall end as designated by the Governor or Commissioner of Administration. Once the emergency/disaster ends, the agency's normal travel policies shall apply.

## II. PROCEDURES

Emergency/disaster travel involves the deployment of DCFS employees from various regions in the state, travel to a specific area of an emergency/disaster event, and the payment of travel subsistence in accordance with State of Louisiana Travel Policy ([PPM 49](#)), this DCFS Emergency/Disaster Policy, and the [DCFS Policy 1-14, Travel Regulations](#).

### A. DEPLOYMENT

Deployment as it relates to emergency/disaster events is the activation of DCFS employees to emergency/disaster ESF-6 duties in a specific area in readiness for action in support of the agency's responsibility for emergency mass care, housing and human services.

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## 1. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

### a. Pre-Deployment Information (What to Know Before You Go)

During the initial call from the Call-Out Manager to report to an emergency/disaster location employees should receive the following information and be provided additional information, if needed:

1. Disaster Travel Order (DTO) - provides the employee with information pertaining to the deployment. The following is included in the DTO:
  - Date Issued
  - Order Number
  - Employee Name, Personnel Number and Address
  - Emergency/disaster name
  - Reporting destination
  - Assigned disaster duty/operation (Shelter, DSNAP, etc)
  - Mission
  - Length of Mission (start date and end date)
  - Duty Station and address
  - Supervisor or team leader
  - Job Description
  - Shift Hours
  - Billeting (lodging) information
  - Special Notes: Overtime, travel (authorized mode of transportation), special hazards, special requirements
  - Signature of Emergency Preparedness Director
2. Inform the Call-Out Manager of any medical issues that may impact the accommodations needed during the assignment (i.e., wheelchair accessibility, use of crutches, dietary restrictions, allergic conditions, etc., supported by medical certifications).

An employee should never self-deploy to an emergency/disaster area or work site without receiving prior authorization from their Call-Out Manager.

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**b. Personal Travel Kit**

If an employee is going to be deployed for any length of time, prepare a travel kit with basic supplies, including medications, toiletries, clothing, and items for daily living. An employee should not assume he/she will find these items at the destination. Cash or traveler's checks should be secured prior to deployment for personal expenses. In areas without power there may be no means to make credit/debit card transactions. However, a personal credit/debit card will usually be required for hotel registration to cover incidental expenses.

**c. Personal and Family Matters**

Deployment for any length of time requires an employee to arrange for their personal and family matters to be taken care of in their absence. Some logistics that should be attended to prior to deployment include:

- Arranging for care of family members and pets
- Arranging for mail delivery
- Arranging for payment of monthly bills
- Cancelling appointments
- Preparing family and friends with as much information on his/her deployment as possible


It is important to make sure all necessary arrangements are complete so an employee can effectively perform their duties and responsibilities during the emergency/disaster assignment.

**d. Emergency/Disaster Check In**

An employee is to immediately check-in with the Site Manager or authorized person upon arrival at the assigned location or work site. Meet with the Site Manager or authorized person, obtain additional information regarding his/her assignment, review written materials, forms and instructions needed for accountability in preparation for the disaster duty/assignment.

## **2. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT DURING DEPLOYMENT**

The DCFS while in an emergency/disaster mode expects that its employees will uphold a standard of conduct that exemplifies the agency's level of professionalism at all times and in all circumstances. Employees deployed for DCFS emergency/disaster travel shall adhere to the following standards:


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- Employees shall be prepared to accept assignments as directed by the Site Manager or authorized ESF-6 manager, director or supervisor and follow the directives relative to travel, transportation or other emergency/disaster related matters.
- Employees shall conduct themselves in a professional manner, show good judgment and character while onsite during a disaster, during respite at hotels or other lodging facilities, while dining at restaurants or at any other venues while deployed.
- Employees shall wear badges and credentials, as applicable, while onsite for an emergency/disaster.
- Employees shall adhere to media policies while onsite for an emergency/disaster.
- Photos, including on camera phones, should not be taken on site except when prepping the emergency/disaster site.
- Employees shall not consume alcoholic beverages after the time of deployment and during scheduled work hours while performing emergency/disaster duties.
- Employees shall not use or sell illegal drugs whether on or off duty.
- Employees shall not knowingly violate any local, state, or federal laws while deployed.
- Employees must adhere to Confidentiality policies, rules and regulations.
- Employees must adhere to the department's dress code.

**Violation of any of the Standards of Conduct may result in disciplinary action per [DCFS Policy 4-07 Disciplinary Corrective Actions and Separations](#).**

## **B. GENERAL TRAVEL INFORMATION**

Emergency/Disaster travel and reimbursement for expenses shall be in accordance with State of Louisiana Travel Policy ([PPM49](#)), [DCFS Policy 1-14, Travel Regulations](#) and any policies and procedures enacted during a disaster by the Department Head or his/her designee.

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## TRANSPORTATION

### Personally Owned Vehicles

Employees authorized to drive personal vehicles and transport other employees are required to report the names of the other passengers for travel reimbursement. Only one individual will be reimbursed for the expense of the vehicle.

### Rental Vehicles


Employees authorized to secure rental vehicles must do so in accordance with the State of Louisiana Travel Policy ([PPM49](#)) and [DCFS Policy 1-14, Travel Regulations](#).

Employees have four payment options when renting vehicles:

- State Liability Travel Card (SLTC) - Employees can use the SLTC and will have to reconcile their Bank of America statements for the charges made to the travel card following the procedures in [DCFS Policy 1-21, Corporate Travel Card](#).
- LaCarte - The LaCarte card can be used and the cardholders will have to reconcile their Bank of America statements following the procedures in [DCFS Policy 1-19, LaCarte Procurement Card Program](#).
- Direct Billing – Each DCFS office, section or unit may establish a direct bill account with Enterprise. An email including contact information should be sent to Joe Rosenfield with Enterprise-Rent-A-Car at [joseph.g.rosenfield@ehi.com](mailto:joseph.g.rosenfield@ehi.com) to request a direct bill application. Enterprise will process the application and establish a direct bill account within two days. Bills can be paid on a purchase order.
- Out of pocket - Employees can pay out of pocket and be reimbursed through LEO for non-client related travel or TIPS for client-related travel. Receipts are required for reimbursement for **regular** unleaded gasoline or diesel, where applicable.

### State Vehicles


Employees authorized to drive and transport other authorized employees in state vehicles should purchase needed fuel, repairs and equipment using all fleet discount allowances and state bulk purchasing contracts, where applicable. Reimbursement requires a receipt for **regular** unleaded gasoline or diesel, where applicable.

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## MILEAGE

Employees authorized to use personally-owned vehicles while conducting official state business during an emergency/disaster are eligible for mileage reimbursement in accordance with State of Louisiana Travel Policy ([PPM49](#)) and [DCFS Policy 1-14, Travel Regulations](#).

- Employees authorized to drive personal vehicles may be reimbursed for mileage to include the departure from the domicile to their assigned disaster/emergency work site and the return from the disaster/emergency work site to their domicile, not to exceed a maximum of 99 miles per round trip and or day at the amount allowed by [PPM49](#) per mile.
- When computing reimbursable mileage to an authorized travel destination from an employee's residence outside the official domicile, the employee is always to claim the lesser of miles from their official domicile or from their residence.
- Employees, outside of the official domicile, authorized to drive personal vehicles to and from the worksite to a lodging facility may be reimbursed mileage at the amount allowed by [PPM49](#) per mile based on the shortest distance and most direct route.
- Employees authorized to travel in the course of performing emergency/disaster duties, but not for infrequent or irregular meetings, etc. within the city limits where his/her office is located may be reimbursed for mileage **only** not to exceed 99 miles per round trip and/or day at the amount allowed by [PPM49](#) per mile.
- Employees authorized to drive personal vehicles for emergency/disaster operations are personally responsible for mileage in excess of three miles roundtrip to secure meals or for any other unauthorized or non-emergency/disaster related travel.


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## LODGING

Employees deployed for emergency/disaster operations will be provided billeting (lodging) information via the Disaster Travel Order (DTO). DCFS will be responsible for room charges only. Incidental expenses are the responsibility of the employee. Employees must present a personal debit or credit card when checking into a hotel to cover any incidental expenses.

- Employees, outside of the domicile, authorized and pre-assigned to lodge at designated lodging facilities shall check-in with proper identification.
- Employees and unauthorized individuals are not allowed to arbitrarily alter, change or cancel a lodging assignment.
- Employees authorized and pre-assigned to a specific lodging facility have the responsibility of notifying the Site Manager, worksite director, supervisor or manager if there are problems or issues with the lodging assignment. The Site Manager, worksite director, supervisor or manager has the responsibility of referring the issue to the appropriate agency personnel for disposition.
- Employees shall not accept DCFS lodging accommodations that they do not intend to utilize. It is the employee's responsibility to notify the Site Manager, worksite director, supervisor or manager if lodging accommodations are not needed and should be cancelled. The Site Manager, worksite director, supervisor or manager has the responsibility of referring the matter to the appropriate DCFS personnel for disposition.
- Employees shall not report to lodging facilities to which they are not assigned or report to a lodging facility requesting the hotel staff to provide lodging under the billing account of DCFS.
- When two or more employees on official state business share the cost of a lodging room, the State will reimburse the actual cost of the room; subject to a maximum amount allowed for an individual traveler times the number of employees. All travelers' names must be on the hotel receipt.
- When two or more employees on official state business share a lodging room and one employee pays the costs, the State will reimburse the actual cost of the room to the individual that paid the cost. The employee that paid the cost must identify the employee with whom the room was shared and submit a statement from that employee that he/she does not intend to submit a claim for reimbursement.




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- Lodging claims for reimbursement secured through Third Party Booking Agents (Hotel.com, Expedia, etc.) and not through the hotel directly, must be accompanied by a paid receipt and an itemized lodging statement from the hotel that identifies the employee's name, dates of lodging and the daily rate that agrees with the Third Party Booking Agent's receipt.
- The Department Head or his/her designee may authorize approval for an employee to be reimbursed for lodging expenses within an employee's domicile with proper justification as to why this is necessary and in the best interest of the state.
- Employees assigned to emergency/disaster operations that are not assigned lodging accommodations through the emergency operations center shall submit a Travel Authorization for approval to incur lodging expenses for reimbursement.
- Reimbursement for lodging expenses requires an itemized, paid (zero balance) receipt reflecting the name of the employee requesting the reimbursement, dates of lodging, the daily rate and the total amount paid for lodging.
- The Department Head or his/her designee has authority to approve actual costs for routine lodging provisions on a case by case basis, not to exceed **fifty percent (50%)** over [PPM49](#) current listed rates.

(Note: this increase in allowance is for lodging only and not for any other area of [PPM49](#)). Justification must be maintained in the file to show that attempts were made with hotels in the area to receive the state/best rate. In areas where the Governor, has declared an emergency, a Department Head or his/her designee will have the authority to approve actual routine lodging provisions on a case by case basis not to exceed **seventy-five percent (75%)** over [PPM49](#) current listed rates.

- The state sales tax exemption should always be requested when securing lodging accommodations in the state of Louisiana. Employees must utilize the authorized Sales Tax Exemption form [R-1376 Sales/Use Tax Exemption Certificate](#) to obtain the exemption.
- In addition to the tax exempt form, a state traveler is also required to have a "copy of the employee's written travel orders which states the dates and destination of the authorized travel", or for state employees, a copy of their travel authorization. This requirement is noted at the bottom of the State of Louisiana's tax exempt form as a requirement of the Department of Revenue. Although not all hotels will request or require the travel authorization form along with the tax exempt form, to be considered tax exempt, more hotels are beginning to require both.



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## MEALS

It is the policy of DCFS to accommodate employees with meals in accordance with the emergency/disaster site planned catering arrangements and scheduling in accordance with State of Louisiana Travel Policy ([PPM49](#)) and [DCFS Policy 1-14, Travel Regulations](#).


- Employees may be reimbursed for meals when there is travel with an overnight stay or a minimum of 12 hours in travel status.
- Employees with Special Needs (dietary restrictions and/or allergic conditions) must inform the Call-Out Manager upon deployment and provide written medical certification to document the special need. Employees will be advised if the request for special needs is approved and the procedures to be utilized in accommodating the special needs. Any special needs meals information must be kept confidential.

### Work Site Meals

- Employees consuming meals at **ALL** work sites must sign the daily Sign-In Sheet ([Word version](#)/[Adobe version](#)) for each meal consumed. Failure to sign in for each meal may result in disciplinary actions.
- Employees will not be reimbursed for out-of-pocket meal expenditures that occurred during the hours worked at emergency/disaster work sites when a meal was available for them.
- Employees outside of the domicile and working shifts during the emergency/disaster may be reimbursed according to the working hours of the shift and the corresponding meal allowances for the shift hours in accordance with State of Louisiana Travel Policy ([PPM49](#)) and [DCFS Policy 1-14, Travel Regulations](#).

Example 1: An employee domiciled in Lafayette, LA, working in Baton Rouge, LA, for the morning shift and housed in a DCFS authorized lodging facility will be provided breakfast and lunch while onsite and may be eligible for reimbursement for the dinner meal of each work day.

Example 2: An employee domiciled in Lafayette, LA, working in Baton Rouge, LA, for the afternoon shift and housed in a DCFS authorized lodging facility will be provided lunch and dinner while onsite and may be eligible for reimbursement for the breakfast meal of each work day.

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Employees working double shifts and provided breakfast, lunch and dinner meals at the worksite are not eligible for reimbursement for any additional meals.

### **Meals for Roving Disaster/Emergency Employees**

- Employees who are roving workers assigned to the field and who routinely travel to multiple emergency/disaster locations prohibiting the consumption of meals provided within the planned catering schedules at worksites may be reimbursed in accordance with State of Louisiana Travel Policy ([PPM49](#)) and [DCFS Policy 1-14, Travel Regulations](#).


A Travel Authorization approved by the Department Head or his/her designee is required for reimbursement of meals consumed outside of the agency's planned catering schedules and worksites.

A blanket Travel Authorization is required for multiple roving employees or staff assigned to the field from the same work class or work area. All blanket Travel Authorizations must include a list of employees assigned to rove or work in the field and estimated meals and costs for each employee.

### **Special Meals**

Special meals during an emergency/disaster are for those occasions of necessity and in the best interest of the state to use public funds. Special Meals require the prior approval of the Department Head or his/her designee.

- Special meals must be within the allowable rates listed under Meals- Tier I of the State of Louisiana Travel Policy ([PPM49](#)) and in accordance with DCFS's Special Meals as outlined in the [DCFS Policy 1-14, Travel Regulations](#), Special Meals.
- Caterers for Special Meals are required to submit the menu for each meal with the request for payment (invoices and itemized receipts).
- Employees and other authorized individuals consuming a Special Meal must sign the Sign In-Sheet ([Word version/Adobe version](#)) for each meal consumed. A separate Sign In Sheet is required for each meal catered (breakfast, lunch or dinner) for every day of consumption.
- The request for Special Meals must be submitted on the DCFS Special Meals Report form, Form DCFS SM 1 ([Adobe version/Word version](#)).

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- Special meals require clear justification for the necessity of the meal, type of meal (breakfast, lunch or dinner), a sign in sheet for the employees consuming the meal, itemized invoices and itemized receipts for payment (regardless of the payment method). The Menu should be attached to the invoice/receipt. Special meals may include tax and tips.
- Authorized and approved Special Meal Report Forms must be submitted to the DCFS Travel Unit at [DCFSTravel@la.gov](mailto:DCFSTravel@la.gov) along with the justification, sign in sheet, menus for each meal, invoices and itemized receipts indicating method of payment within 7 days of the Special Meal occurrence. The email should reference "Special Meal" in the subject line.

## PARKING and TOLLS

Parking shall be reimbursed in accordance with State of Louisiana Travel Policy ([PPM49](#)) unless pre-negotiated parking arrangements have been secured for agency employees to store and park vehicles. Any employee electing to secure his/her own parking arrangement outside of the agency's pre-negotiated parking arrangements is financially responsible for all parking charges incurred.

Employees using authorized vehicles on official state business will be reimbursed for ferry fares and tolls. All parking, ferry fares and tolls over \$5 require a paid receipt reflecting the date and total charges (valet tickets are not considered paid parking receipts).


## COMMUNICATIONS EXPENSES

For official state business during an emergency/disaster, all business communications costs may be reimbursed, receipts required. This includes Internet access charges that are documented with an official state business purpose.

- For domestic overnight travel up to amount allowed per [PPM49](#) for personal calls upon arrival at each destination and up to amount allowed per [PPM49](#) for personal calls every second night after the first night if travel extends several days.
- Baggage tips up to amount allowed per [PPM49](#) for tips per hotel check-in and per [PPM49](#) for tips per hotel check-out, if applicable.

## LAUNDRY SERVICES

Employees on travel for more than seven days may be reimbursed, with Department Head or his/her designee approval, up to actual, but reasonable, costs incurred. Receipts are required for reimbursement.


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## TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT CLAIMS

DCFS will not honor emergency/disaster claims for reimbursement when there is no cost incurred by the employee. This includes, but is not limited to reimbursements for any lodging and/or meals furnished at a state institution or other state agency, or furnished by any other party at no cost to the traveler. In no case will an employee be allowed mileage or transportation when he/she is gratuitously transported by another person.

### Reimbursement Claims Procedures

- All claims for reimbursement for emergency/disaster travel shall be submitted on DCFS's Emergency/Disaster Travel Expense Account Form-PMF 110-E ([Word version](#)/[Adobe version](#)) and shall include all details provided for on the form.
- The Emergency/Disaster Travel Expense Account Form-PMF 110-E must be completed on site while working at the assigned ESF-6 location. Employees claiming the reimbursement must sign the expense account form. The signature is required of the Site Manager, worksite director, supervisor or manager that can attest to the information supporting the reimbursement claim for the emergency/disaster work performed.
- If expenses listed on the reimbursement claim are paid directly or charged to DCFS, notation must be indicated on the expense report in the Comments section. (i.e., Lodging was direct billed to DCFS or Lodging was paid on State Liability Travel Card).
- If expenses listed on the reimbursement claim are paid by an employee's personal credit or debit card, notation must be indicated on the expense report in the Comments section. (i.e., Lodging was paid by personal credit card).
- Travel reimbursement claims **MUST** be completed on a **WEEKLY** basis in accordance with the Instructions for the [Emergency/Disaster Travel Expense Account Form-PMF110-E Instructions](#). The travel week for reimbursement purposes is Monday to Sunday.
- Approved Emergency/Disaster Travel Expense Account Forms **MUST** be transmitted to the DCFS Travel Unit each **Monday** following the week of completed travel. Transmissions with multiple travel expense reports **MUST** include a transmittal log detailing personnel numbers, names, dates of travel and amounts of the travel expense reports submitted.

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- Approved Emergency/Disaster Travel Expense Account Forms may be emailed/scanned to [DCFSTravel@la.gov](mailto:DCFSTravel@la.gov). The subject line of the email for a single transmission should reflect the employee's personnel number, name and date of travel. Transmissions with multiple travel expense reports **MUST** include a transmittal log detailing personnel numbers, names, dates of travel and amounts of the travel expense reports submitted. The subject line of the email for multiple transmissions should reflect "Emergency/Disaster Travel – ESF-6 location, (i.e., Healing Place)".
- Approved Emergency/Disaster Travel Expense Account Forms may be hand delivered **WEEKLY** to the DCFS Travel Unit, Fiscal Services Division at 627 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. Travel expense account forms must be deposited in the 6<sup>th</sup> floor incoming mail box for proper receipt.
- Travel reimbursement claims **should not** be faxed to the DCFS Travel Unit.
- Employees are to ensure that his/her handwriting and receipt copies are legible. Travel expense reimbursement claims that are illegible and/or too light will be returned to the employee at the worksite for compliance and resubmission.

### III. FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS

- DCFS's Emergency/Disaster Travel Expense Account Form-PMF 110-E ([Word version](#)/[Adobe version](#))
- DCFS's [Emergency/Disaster Travel Expense Account Form-PMF 110-E Instructions](#)
- Form DCFS SM 1 ([Adobe version](#)/[Word version](#))
- [Certificate of Sales/Use Tax Exemption/Exclusion \(R1376\) Form](#)

### IV. REFERENCES

- [DCFS Policy 1-02, Emergency Preparedness](#)
- [DCFS Policy 1-14, Travel Regulations](#)
- [DCFS Policy 1-19, LaCarte Procurement Card Program](#).
- [DCFS Policy 1-21, Corporate Travel Card](#)
- [DCFS Policy 4-10, Human Resources Procedures for Emergency-Disaster Operations](#)
- [State of Louisiana Travel Policy \(PPM49\)](#)